

RECKLESS RALPH'S

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP



A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

Published by Ralph F. Cummings, Box 75, Fisherville, Mass., U. S. A.

Price \$2.00 per year

Ad Rates: 5c per word, 75c per inch, quarter page \$2.00, half page \$3.00, full page \$5.00. Four times for the price of three.

Vol. 15

July 1947

No. 178

1072 Townsend Ave.
New Haven 13, Conn.
May 31, 1946

AN OPEN LETTER TO MR. FLAUM

Had a postal and a letter from you long ago and am ashamed to think I never answered them. But I sure have got to drop you a line now to thank you for the wonderful job you have done on a very much needed piece of work. The Index-Digest of the Round-Up.

I don't know how many times I have thumbed thru my copies of DNR trying to find some bit of information I wanted, sometimes to find it and sometimes not. WHAT A TASK you have done, that represents hours and hours of work I know.

Have often thought myself of indexing for my own use at least certain items but never got to it, as all the time I can spare goes to my self-appointed task of tracing the reprints which are contained in Magnet and New Magnet Library. Been at it at odd moments for about 2 years with plenty to go. I once wrote Guinon of Little Rock the top-flight Tip Top specialist, that I had mislaid a letter of his so couldn't answer a question he asked, he replied that he spent about 3 weeks indexing items he thought he would need in DNR into a note book, in less than a week he mislaid the book and has never seen it since.

BOSTON. Haven't been there in 30 years. Worked in Boston from Feb. 1909 to Mar. 1910 when I was about 23 years old. Roomed at 12 Myrtle St. up in back of the State House and later at 544 Columbus Ave. near Mass.

Ave. Earned so little money I could barely sleep and eat so couldn't spend money on novels except to buy the Tip Top and Nick Carter every week. Would have willingly gone without a meal rather than not to buy those two.

Remember one experience to show how plentiful novels were in those days. To get the most of good food at a cheap price we used to (we, meaning a chum and I) always ate at noon in the B&M RR YMCA, to get there we used to take a narrow street that ran from somewhere around the State House down across Cambridge and Greene streets to vicinity of North Station. Can't remember names of streets with any certainty after all these years. On this street was a little old-fashioned, even in those days, tobacco and candy and news store presided over by a little old white haired man. We used to stop in there whenever either of us had an extra nickel and get a couple at 2½c each. On one side he had counters with a little tobacco and candy. Other side 3 shelves ran the length of his store with novels piled on them. In center was a long bin with novels in foot high piles about 30 piles long and two wide. All color covers.

One time I was talking to him and he said as long as you haven't much spare money why don't you buy the old "black & white" such as N. Y. Det., N. C. Lib., Beadles, etc., etc. They are much cheaper as no one seems to want them any more. And he took me to the back of his store and in an alcove were novels stacked from floor to ceiling. In paper packages marked 25, 50, 100. Containing

black and whites. I tried to get him to untie a package and sell me 5 for a nickel but he said a 25 package was the smallest he would sell. They were a penny each, smallest package 25, the largest 100 for a dollar. GEE, when I think of it. I never did buy any of them as at that time everybody spurned "black & whites."

My set of Tip Tops having been complete for years I haven't dealt in them in anyway. Have perhaps a half dozen duplicates most of them in utterly wretched condition. I have been struggling for 15 years to complete Nick Carter and Diamond Dick Jr. but haven't done it yet.

Sincerely

Harold C. Holmes

DALTON RELATIVES VISIT JAMES HOME

Clipped from the St. Joseph, Mo.
Gazette, Jan. 14th, 1947

Relatives of the Daltons paid a call in St. Joseph yesterday and went to the Jesse James house as a matter of professional courtesy.

Because of the weather conditions and change of ownership, the place on the Belt highway was not open yesterday. But the visitors found Geo. A. Miller, the new owner, and asked him to let them in.

Mr. Miller made a special trip to show the party about. There were six in the group. One a Kansas City barber named Dalton said he was a cousin of the Daltons in the famous gang. His mother, who was with him, said she had known some of the Dalton men; also some of the Youngers.

She had good words for the Daltons, who led exciting lives in Kansas and Oklahoma. Some of the men seemed to be right nice fellows, she said. The same words that are spoken in many parts of the middle west about Jesse James and his men.

—Sent in by Clinton B. Goodwin

NEWSY NEWS

by Ralph F. Cummings

We mentioned in last issue about poor old Charlie Austin and others passing to the great beyond, but didn't have the room to spare, to give a little better account of these old timers.

We've known Charlie since he did business in his candy store at 2241 N. 29th St., in Phila., Pa. Makes me think of the second time I went to see Charlie, Bob Smeltzer took me, ye editor, over to see him, what a night we had looking over the old timers, and talking about this, that and every thing. First time, Uncle Billie Beners took me over to see him. Uncle Billie and Charlie hated each other, and still they loved to trade novels, when they could. I remember, one time, when I was taking care of Uncle Billie, when he was down in the Skin & Cancer hospital of Phila., with a very bad cancer, Charlie Austin came over one morning, before I went down to take care of Uncle Billie, Charlie wanted to see some of Uncle Billie's novels, so I took him in the bedroom and showed him Frank Reade's and others. We had a fine time. I didn't know that I did wrong, but soon found out. When I went down to the hospital, I told Uncle Billie of the visitor I had, and of showing him the different novels and story papers, etc. (as Uncle Billie, as he wanted every one to call him) let me stay at his apartments to kind of look after the place a little, when I wasn't down with him. First Uncle Billie asked me this and that, and so on, then he asked me who gave me permission to take Charlie in, and show him his collection? Boy, the bombshell exploded, and did I get a dressing down—boy, I never forgot it.

Charlie was one of my very best friends, so was Uncle Billie. And at the hospital, I couldn't even look a nurse in the eye, because they could hear every thing Uncle Billie said to me, outside of his door. The nurses were relieved because when he wasn't finding fault with them, then we got it. (You see, Mrs. Marie L. Bendig and myself took care of Uncle Billie nearly a year at the hospital, as the nurses had nothing to do with him, because he found so much fault with them, and I guess they couldn't stand it, so that's why we, two real friends of Uncle Billie were called down to take care of him. We were with him to the day he died. God bless him always. Many's the time I went out on the back fire escape, and cried as if I were a little kid. My nerves were pretty well shot, at that time. I wouldn't want my worst enemy to

have a cancer, not after what I have seen of it. They're in pain all the time, and there's nothing you can do to relieve them of it. But coming back to Charlie, a fine dear old friend he was to me, my first trip down to see him in Philadelphia was in Sept. 1937. But we've known each other for over 25 years.

Fred Orphal says to read over again Charlie's article in Dime Novel Round Up No. 41 the May 1935 issue, also No. 65, Aug. 1937 issue, also Charlie's full page write up, in the Phila. Inquirer for Jan. 1st, 1939, well illustrated with Charlie in the back of his candy counters, holding up Beadles Dime & Half Dime Libraries in either hand, with a nice lot of pictures of novels and everything hung up on the walls all around the store. Fred and Charlie were about the same age, and they had great times telling of each others hobby, etc. Charlie had beside novels and story papers, cigarette cards, circus bills, and what-not. Charlie was a real Beadle fan. He had hundreds of Beadles Dime Novels, Dime Libraries, Half Dimes, and others, all packed nicely in heavy galvanized tin boxes. It kept his novels wonderfully.

Joseph Gantner, another real friend of us all. He wrote many articles for the Roundup, such as No. 111, My Search for Old Nick Carters, #116. Old Circuses and Weeklies, #128. Was That Jesse James?, #129. Old Nick Carters, #136. Authors of Old Weeklies, #160. I Killed Lincoln, and I have several I haven't used yet. How Joe did enjoy seeing his writeups in the Roundups and making new friends all the time, and what not, we shall miss you, and all that have passed to the great beyond.

Thomas Baker, another old friend, was a great card collector, as well as novels, and soon's things are settled, his wife will offer them for sale. Benjamin Hallett, whom I met a few years ago, made me think a lot of Frank James, looked just like him. Only spent about an hour or more with him. His home was his museum and after work, how he loved, to look at his collectors items.

Yep, we aren't going to see Ringling Bros.-Barnum & Bailey Circus in Worcester this year, nor in any other part of New England.

Charles Duprez and his wife from

Bellerose, L. I., N. Y. and Harold C. Holmes of New Haven, Conn., were up here the day after Memorial Day. We all had our pictures snapped together. Whoopee!

George Flaum stopped in to see Bill Claggett and Hermon Pitcher on his way home to Newark, N. Y.

Edwin Sissing and wife are out in California, and are expecting to settle out there. Ed dropped in to see P. J. Moran.

We hear that the Searchlight Book Co., of New York has nipped one of our members pretty bad. This company folded up some months ago.

Send 25c for the June 1947 issue of The Antiquer, 97 E. Colorado Street, Pasadena 1, California. There is an article in that issue on "Dime Novels" and ye editor Cummings is in it. A good writeup, by Clarence N. Fink, but a little exaggerated.

Bob Smeltzer had a fine write-up on "The James Boys," in the Hobby-Swapper, Camden, Ohio, in the June issue. Send 10c for copy. Front cover has Jesse on one side, and Frank on the other, with a picture of "The James Boys Weekly" No. 1 in the middle.

Jim Tully, one time Hobo and author of several books died June 23rd 1947.

Well fellows, dues to the Roundup starting July 1st 1947 are \$2.00 per year now. Sorry we have to do this, but we can't help ourselves. Don Learnard and others admit that while they know that the Country Gentleman and other big farm papers, etc. could be had at 25c per year, we mustn't judge by that. The Little Roundup is the only connecting link that holds us members together, and \$2.00 per year for the club dues would make it fair to every member. Most all the boys are expecting this, and know that we'll do the right thing, what ever that may be. So fellows, let's all pull together, and send in the difference, what ever it may be.

Roy E. Morris says he had a very nice April 23rd, up to Bro. George H. Hess, Jr.'s place. He says George has the largest collection he ever saw in his life. Come east Roy, and you'll see some more.

George Sahr says there is one other place, that it rained so hard, and that was in New York Detective Library where the James Boys were on the road. He says D. W. Stevens used

to enjoy bringing in a rainstorm quite often.

Don S. Learnard has been elected Master of Lodge of Sterling Masons. We're all very glad to hear of your promotion, and hope you are able to go through all the chairs, good luck to you always Don.

Bill Burns says he's just discovered the two tales mentioned in In Refutation in June No. were later reprinted as #160-165 of Beadles Pocket Library, and in both cases the author is listed as Col. Prentiss Ingraham. This also shows Bill was right.

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Fisherville, Mass.

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FRED FEARNOT'S BACK!

Below is a list of my current wants. If you have any of them in good condition and can use any of the items in this advertisement I will trade even for any of the Tip-Tops that I need and give five for one for any colored covered Frank Reade Weekly Magazines, or Wright stories published in Pluck & Luck. But whether you have any of my wants I will be willing to consider any trade for any novels you may have, providing, of course, that they are in good condition. All items listed are also offered for sale at the indicated price. On orders of less than five dollars add ten percent to cover cost of packing and shipment.

My Current Want List: Tip-Tops 269 270 276 282 318 319 321 322 326 334 345 346 348 613 615 662 665 668 669 671 672 673 674 675 680 686 692 693 694 696 697 698 699 701 704 705 707 708 709 710 712 713 714 715 716. **Pluck & Luck:** 139 166 214 254 258 262 274 278 282. **Frank Reade Weekly Magazines:** Any numbers in good condition.

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